

10/27/2020

Wendy Parent-Johnson
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Dear Wendy:

I would like to thank you for the continuous support of advising and educating us in Customized employment/Supported employment. Your Job Coach training was so motivating for all of my staff and myself and the "word on the street" was that it was an excellent and informative training that Vendors and VR Counselors/Staff could use as a successful and meaningful way toward successful employment for our clients.

We loved the tools that we could use with all levels of disabilities and the strategies that we could use to make it a reality of success.

It made all of us think about how to use Job coaching properly and meaningfully with each level of clients we work with from the very inexperienced, client's with significant challenges, or even clients that we consider "high functioning" and work them towards successfully obtaining and maintaining a Career that they have always desired to accomplish or have the abilities in a Career that will end in successful employment.

I feel that Supported Employment/Customized Employment is a definite need for the State of Arizona Vocational Rehabilitation program. This will succeed in accountability of providing the client the necessary tools of obtaining and maintaining employment as well as making vendors accountable for their Job search/Job retention services. This will also eliminate the "dead end/entry level" jobs that do not have advancement towards a career. This program will give the client tools to ameliorate, circumvent and sustain employment. It gives a better framework on how to work with the clients both from the prospective of the VRC and the vendor.

I have collaborated with Starz and Hope Group to use some of the tools/strategies that you have provided to improve client vocational outcomes. Through reports from both of these agencies, they have seen clients have marked improvement in independent living skills, self-advocacy skills, job skills, confidence and motivation, career education (having other options to explore in careers), learning that there is no barriers to employment, and informed choices that will lead to quantitative life changes.

There is such a great need in Arizona to implement this program and to change the outlook of what job coaching is in obtaining and retaining employment as well as changing perspectives of employers, community in hiring people with disabilities. It also changes the perspectives of the client and their families as well that they can be a major contributor to their community with a realistic, successful career.

We need ongoing access to this type of training because it prepares vendors to become qualified job coaches that will meet the needs of the client. Well trained Job coaches will help clients achieve self-sufficiency and become a contributing member of society. There is no training of this kind in the State

of Arizona and this would definitely improve outcomes for clients towards meaningful employment. This training looks at the “Whole” person and not as a “number” as “rumored” that VR is a “numbers game” of getting successful closures and not addressing the rehabilitation needs of the client. This will also address the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to have a better understanding of the true meaning of job development and placement, rehabilitation and addressing the client holistically.

I hope you can continue Supported employment/Customized employment and help Arizona become a leader in the rehabilitation field.

Thank you so much for all your support and I appreciate all you do.

Sincerely,

Janice Bradford
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